

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
January 27, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: 6:32 p.m.

INVOCATION: Reverend Christopher Perez – St. Andrews Anglican Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

Mrs. Barron was absent. All other members were present.

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, REMONSTRATIONS:

The Town of Merrillville will honor Black History Month in February. There will be acknowledgement on the digital sign in front of Town Hall for the entire month.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of the Accounts Payable Register Voucher dated January 27, 2015.

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2015. Mrs. Miano made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Pettit. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

BUDGET & FINANCE:

Mr. Pettit had no report.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Mr. Spann had no report.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS:

Mrs. Miano is going to pursue establishing additional licensing and reviewing ordinances regarding town scrappers, solicitors and clothing collection bins. Mrs. Miano believes the scrappers should be required to have proper licensing with display on the vehicle indicating proper numbers & markings. She would also like to have solicitors wear lanyards showing they have obtained the necessary permits so that the residents know the solicitors have met all requirement of the town. Mrs. Miano will also be looking into licensing any business that has a collection bin used for business purposes instead of items donated to the less fortunate.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:

Mr. Pettit had no report.

PUBLIC SAFETY:

Mr. Widing had no report.

PARKS & RECREATION:

Mrs. Miano announced a committee of labor organizations was formed and the development of Union Park will begin in spring of this year. She met with our new Park Director, Jan Orlich, and discussed issues that our residents are looking for. They will be developing a variety of different programs for children, young adults, adults and senior citizens. Mrs. Miano said that they going to devise a senior advisory committee and meet weekly. Also the committee will pursue feedback from town residents as to what they are interested in and what type of programs they would like to see.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS:

Mr. Goralczyk had no report. Matt Lake thanked various organizations for submitting letters of support for our Clean Community challenge application to IDM. He also mentioned planning to renew the Inter-local agreement with the Town of Winfield some point this year.

ELECTIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Mrs. Miano commented on the success of the Community Coat Program, they have provided 63 coats to people in need. The program will continue every Saturday from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. for the month of February.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Mr. Pettit had no report.

UTILITY LIAISON:

Mrs. Barron was absent, no report.

ABANDONED PROPERTIES:

Mr. Hardaway mentioned that the Abandoned Properties committee met last week. They identified three homes in foreclosure that are bank owned. Mr. Bushemi sent a letter to the lenders asking them their intentions of the building, with a 30 day response time. If no response is provided from the lender, the town will pursue accepting title for the properties. These three properties will be the test case to see exactly what we will do going forward. Mr. Goralczyk recommended to partner up with Habitat for Humanity. Mr. Hardaway said that when we have to demolish a home, we would look to donate the lot to the program. Mr. Guernsey, as a member of the Abandoned Properties committee, said this committee is one of the most important at this time because these properties can hurt the home values in the community. He received phone calls from residents saying they were glad to see the town is doing something about the issue. Mr. Hardaway said the intent is to maintain the integrity of the Town of Merrillville as related to the property values in the community.

GENERAL ORDERS:

FIRST READING ORDINANCES:

None

SECOND READING ORDINANCES:

None

RESOLUTIONS:

Res. 15-04: A resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana authorizing a temporary loan to fulfill monetary requirements necessary for debt service payment. (Retroactive to 1/12/15)

Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Spann. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

BZA ACTIONS:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Acceptance of Ice Miller LLP to serve as bond council for the Multifamily Housing, Revenue Bonds, Series 2015. (Bravo Properties Assisted Living Project) Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Spann. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Pettit questioned if we opened the bids for the Madison & 73rd project. Mr. Spires responded that the bids are postponed until Friday, January 30, 2015 at 10 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Hardaway was talking to a resident of Hickory Ridge apartments and found that the residents are still being assessed a rental registration fee but are calling it a Merrillville tax, which is misleading to the resident. Mr. Bushemi requested a copy of the information and will check into the matter. A discussion regarding rental registration followed. Mrs. Gregor stated letters have been mailed to each landlord explaining the fee has been rescinded. Any payments received have been refunded.

Mr. Goralczyk announced that state laws are changing for businesses located in the area of Whitcomb Street. It will impact a company named Indiana Wholesalers whom is currently doing business there. This business requested a letter of support from the Town of Merrillville. A discussion followed in regards to this matter.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

All public comment is recorded on cassette tape and kept on file in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office at Town Hall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, January 28, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
Stormwater Management Board meeting, February 3, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.
Police Commission meeting, February 6, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.
RDC meeting, February 10, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.
Town Council meeting, February 10, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Pettit and seconded by Mr. Hardaway.

Tom Goralczyk, President

Eugene Guernsey, Clerk-Treasurer